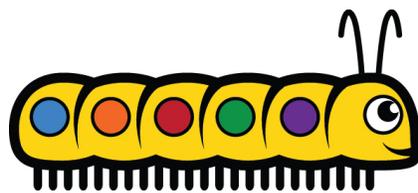




Connecticut Early Learning
and Development Standards

12-18 Months

Here are some ways that you can help your child learn and grow in all of the areas covered in the Connecticut Early Learning and Development Standards (CT ELDS). You may see some ideas in different areas that are almost the same. That's because children are learning a lot of different things as they learn more about the people and the world around them. These ideas don't have to be all you do with your child! You can think of new ways to build on everything included here. Just as your child is learning, you can keep learning ways to support your child's growth. The most important thing to remember as you use these strategies is to have fun and find ways to help your child learn every day!



Connecticut Office
of Early Childhood



Cognition

Allow your child time to explore and use materials that they are interested in

Children learn by exploring and trying things. When children use items for a while, they get to try the same action over and over, or try new things. Children might have certain items or things that they like. Those items can be a great way to keep a child interested.

Talk about cause and effect

Provide a chance for your child to do things that cause something to happen. Hold them up to turn the lights on and off. Blow bubbles when doing the dishes and let them pop the bubble. Talk about what is happening and try different things to see if something different happens.

Offer your child choices

Planning and finishing things is important as children get older. Set the stage for your child by allowing them to choose a toy or choose which cup they drink from. Talk about their choices.

Allow your child time to solve problems

You may want to jump in and help your child as soon as they begin to struggle with something. Allowing your child a chance to find a solution on their own will help them learn to keep trying. It will also allow them time to practice new skills. Don't hesitate to help if they get too frustrated.

Social and Emotional Development

Create a daily routine that is predictable but flexible

Consistent routines allow your child to know what to expect, and can help your child feel confident and safe. Routines also provide a good time for introducing new things while your child feels safe and secure. For example, during your child's bedtime routine, you might ask your child to wait for a few minutes, teach your child a new song, read a new book, and ask questions; or encourage your child to begin to take off an item of clothing. With a predictable routine, the activity will seem comfortable to your child and they can focus on the new skill or behavior.

Support your child in communicating their preferences and emotions

Your child is beginning to move about, explore, and interact with the world around them. With these new opportunities, they will begin to show preferences and will try some things that are challenging. Talking about your child's experiences and feelings helps them to feel supported; they begin to learn to communicate their feelings, needs, and wants.





Physical Health and Development

Provide safe opportunities for your child to challenge their large motor skills

It can be hard to see your child stumble or fall as they are building new skills. But by stumbling and falling, young children learn to balance and avoid obstacles. Find or create spaces where your child can move about and fall without getting hurt. Place pillows or cushions so your child won't fall on something hard. Place your child at the bottom of carpeted stairs and stay right behind them in case of a fall. Put on music or play a game that encourages your child to try new movements, such as turning, jumping, or crawling up stairs.

Give your child objects to handle purposefully

Provide your child with blocks or empty boxes to stack, items to put into a container, or large beads to join or take apart. Give your child washable markers or large crayons and paper. Allow them to make marks while you watch and make sure they are using the materials safely. Model how to use these items and have fun.

Find ways for your child to participate in dressing, bathing, or eating that fit with your family and culture

Are there things that your child can do for themselves that match what your family or culture might expect young children to do? Can your child take off an item of clothing when dressing or toileting? Are there food items that your child can feed to themselves using hands or utensils? Think of ways that your child might play a role in self-care.

Language and Literacy

Talk about the things that interest your child

Notice the things that your child spends the most time with and seems excited by. Talking with your child about a variety of things is important, but pay special attention to those things your child is interested in. Use their interests to build vocabulary. For example, if your child is interested in cars, they may learn the words *wheel* or *horn*. If your child is interested in dogs, they may learn the words *tail* and *bark*. These interests can motivate your child, and their interest in learning new words can spread to other topics.

Encourage your child to communicate in any way that works for them

As young children learn to communicate, they may use shorter versions of words, sounds such as grunting or squealing, or facial expressions and gestures (e.g. pointing) to communicate. Respond to your child's attempts to communicate and help others understand your child. You can model complete words or phrases to help your child expand their communication skills.

Continue to expose your child to books, pictures, songs, and signs

Language and literacy are everywhere! Point out pictures or words in fun ways to show them that words and pictures are fun and interesting. Share things important to your family and culture that involve language and literacy, such as books, pictures, and songs. Share and talk about family photos. Consider creating labels for photos with people's names so your child sees letters and words along with pictures. These experiences are the building blocks to reading.





Creative Arts

Provide your child with materials that allow them to explore and see the results of their actions

There are many ways for your child to explore the results of their actions: drawing lines in sand or shaving cream, banging on a drum or pot to make a sound, or even acting silly to make someone laugh. These are all ways that your child begins to understand the process of creating.

Show your child new and different ways of doing things

Be creative with the items around your house in ways that fit with your culture and comfort. Put something on your head to make a silly hat, arrange snack items to look like a face or animal, or dress up in someone else's clothes while folding laundry with your child. Have fun and show your child how being creative and thinking in new ways can be a good experience. The possibilities are endless!

Talk with your child about what you see, hear, and feel

Talking about the features of the things around you draws your child's attention to different attributes. You can talk about color, lines, volume, rhythm, or movement. Your child may not be able to talk about these things for a while, but pointing out things such as lines that are straight and those that are squiggly lets your child know that this is something interesting and notable. Help your child experience these things as actively as possible by incorporating movement (e.g. dance to the rhythm) and touch (e.g. trace the squiggly line). Have fun!

Mathematics

Use number words

Although it may seem early, strong foundations for mathematics begin early. By counting out three crackers at snack or talking about who has more blocks, your child can begin to understand that these words are about "how many?" Although your child won't be able to count for some time, they may begin to use words such as "more" and may say some number names. This is the beginning of learning math.

Talk about size

Talk about *big/little* or *tall/short*. Use other size words. This brings your child's attention to what is the same and different about items, and helps them to begin to learn size vocabulary.

Encourage your child to match one thing with another

Help your child to give one item to each person, to set one stuffed animal in each chair, or to put items into a container one at a time. Activities such as these help your child match one item with one item. This will help them when they need to match one number name to each item they are counting.

Talk about and explore shapes

Your child may not learn the names for shapes for some time, but you can set the stage for this learning now. Provide materials that are different shapes so your child can explore the smooth round shape of a ball or the edges of a square block. By bringing your child's attention to important things about these shapes, they will be getting ready to learn shape names down the road.

